






An Overview: Stoplight Color Coding System Criteria Green, Yellow, and Red Designations

The criteria for the Fueled to Fight (F2F) system takes into consideration both nutrient density and overall nutrition quality. Assigning a Green “Engage at Will”, Yellow “Well Aimed Shots”, or Red “Check Fire” designation requires an examination of each food as a whole, including additives, degree of processing, and nutrient values. This Marine Corps mess hall program empowers and educates Marines on making informed decisions on meal items in order to maintain a high level of performance. Consuming excess portions from any of the groups can lead to excess calories which could exceed individual need.

	Green	Yellow	Red
			
Overall Nutrition Quality	Least-processed Wholesome, nutrient dense High fiber Low in added sugar Healthy fats	Moderate-processed Lower in fiber Added sugars or artificial sweeteners Lower quality fats	Most-processed Lowest-quality nutrients Added sugar Excess fats and/or trans fats Fried foods
Nutrient Specifics: FATS	$\leq 30\%$ of calories from total fats and $\leq 10\%$ of calories from saturated fat Foods with $\geq 30\%$ calories from fats are considered healthier if mainly from unsaturated fats, including omega-3 fatty acids	$31\text{--}49\%$ of calories from total fats and $11\text{--}15\%$ of calories from saturated fat Some fats can be consumed daily with close attention to portion size	$\geq 50\%$ of calories from total fats and $\geq 16\%$ of calories from saturated fat Trans fats are not authorized in dining facilities and must be avoided Saturated fats
Nutrient Specifics: CARBOHYDRATES	Higher in fiber containing >3 grams of fiber Most foods that have <10 grams of added sugar	Most products made with white or refined flour or other refined grains Non-naturally occurring fibers: inulin, chicory root, polydextrose, maltodextrin	Low in fiber containing < 2 grams Most foods that contain >18 grams of added sugar
Nutrient Specifics: PROTEIN	Plant-based protein is almost always considered healthier Leaner cuts of animal-based protein is considered healthier based on the amount and type of fat it contains	Highly processed plant proteins such as soy protein isolate Lean cuts based on percentage of fat	Highly processed meats and meat products Fried animal proteins or cuts with visible fat
Other Specifics: ADDITIVES	No artificial sweeteners Naturally occurring foods generally do not have additives	Artificial sweeteners, including acesulfame potassium, aspartame (Equal®), saccharin (Sweet’N Low®), sucralose (Splenda®)	Trans fats Artificial colors are usually a marker of a highly processed food